

Magistrate Judge Brett

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	CASE NO. MJ 15-532
Plaintiff,)	
v.)	
)	COMPLAINT for VIOLATION
)	Title 18, U.S.C. Sections 2252(a)(2)
)	and 2252(a)(4)(B)
ERIC EUGENE LOBDELL,)	
Defendant.)	
)	
)	

BEFORE the Honorable Dean Brett, United States Magistrate Judge, U. S.
Courthouse, Bellingham, Washington.

The undersigned complainant being duly sworn states:

COUNT 1

(Distribution of Child Pornography)

On or about January 27th, 2015, at Clinton, within the Western District of
Washington, and elsewhere, ERIC EUGENE LOBDELL did knowingly distribute, and
attempt to distribute, visual depictions, the production of which involved the use of
minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct and the visual depictions were of such

1 conduct, using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce and which
2 images had been mailed and shipped and transported in and affecting interstate and
3 foreign commerce by any means, including by computer.

4 All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(2), (b)(1).

5 **COUNT 2**

6 **(Possession of Child Pornography)**

7 Beginning on a date unknown and continuing until on or about June 16th, 2015, at
8 Clinton, within the Western District of Washington, ERIC EUGENE LOBDELL did
9 knowingly possess matter that contained visual depictions, the production of which
10 involved the use of minors, prepubescent minors, and minors under the age of twelve
11 years engaging in sexually explicit conduct and the visual depictions were of such
12 conduct, that had been mailed and shipped and transported using any means and facility
13 of interstate and foreign commerce and in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce,
14 and which had been produced using materials that had been mailed and shipped and
15 transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, including by
16 computer.

17 All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(4)(B), (b)(2).

18 And the Complainant states that this Complaint is based on the following
19 information:

20 I, Pauline Renick, Detective, Bellingham Police Department and also Task
21 Force Officer, United States Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security
22 Investigations, being duly sworn under oath, do hereby depose and state as follows:

23 **I. INTRODUCTION**

24 1. I am a Detective with the Bellingham Police Department assigned to the
25 Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Unit and have been for eighteen months. I
26 have been employed by the Bellingham Police Department since November 1992.
27 Before that, I was in the United States Army where I was a Military Police Officer for
28 approximately four years and then I was a Special Agent with the United States Army

1 Criminal Investigation Division. The Bellingham Police Department detectives division
2 is responsible for investigating felony crimes to include sexual assaults, assaults upon
3 children, homicides, and burglaries. I am also a Task Force Officer with the Department
4 of Homeland Security (DHS), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), assigned to the
5 Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC), Blaine, Washington, field office. I have
6 been working with HSI as a task force officer since September 2014. HSI is responsible
7 for enforcing the customs and immigration laws and federal criminal statutes involving
8 the sexual exploitation of children. As part of my duties, I investigate criminal violations
9 relating to child exploitation and child pornography, including violations pertaining to the
10 illegal production, distribution, receipt, and possession of child pornography and material
11 involving the sexual exploitation of minors in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251 and
12 2252(a).

13 2. I am a graduate of the Washington State Basic Law Enforcement Academy
14 located in Burien, Washington, and the U.S. Customs Task Force Officer Training in
15 Blaine, Washington. My training included courses in law enforcement techniques, state
16 and federal criminal statutes, conducting criminal investigations, and the execution of
17 search warrants. I have had the opportunity to observe and review numerous examples of
18 child pornography as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256(8). As an affiliate member of the
19 Seattle ICAC Task Force in the Western District of Washington, I work with other
20 federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel in the investigation and prosecution of
21 crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children. I have attended periodic seminars,
22 meetings, and trainings concerning the investigation of child exploitation crimes,
23 including the ICAC Investigative Techniques Training Program in Alexandria, Virginia,
24 in May 2014 and the ICAC Undercover Investigations Training Program in Alexandria,
25 Virginia, in June 2014. I also attended the Ares Peer to Peer (P2P) file sharing program
26 training located in Phoenix, Arizona, in March 2015, which dealt with the investigation
27 of uploading and downloading files from one source IP addresses. I received an AA
28 degree in Criminal Justice from Walla Walla Community College and continued taking

1 other courses in Criminal Justice through St. Martin's College, Lacey, Washington, and
 2 Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wisconsin.

3 3. I am familiar with and have participated in a variety of investigative
 4 techniques including but not limited to: surveillance, interviewing of witnesses/suspects,
 5 and the execution of search and seizure warrants that involved child exploitation and/or
 6 child pornography offenses and the search and seizure of computers and other digital
 7 devices.

8 4. I make this Affidavit in support of a criminal complaint charging ERIC
 9 EUGENE LOBDELL with distribution of child pornography in violation of 18 U.S.C.
 10 § 2252(a)(2), (b)(2) and possession of child pornography in violation of 18 U.S.C.
 11 § 2252(a)(4)(B), (b)(1). The facts set forth below are based on my personal knowledge,
 12 information provided to me by other law enforcement agents and witnesses, my training
 13 and experience, reports, and other evidence gathered during this investigation. I do not
 14 purport to list every fact known to me as a result of my investigation but only those I
 15 believe necessary to support a finding of probable cause.

16 5. As detailed below, based on my investigation and the investigation of other
 17 law enforcement officers, I submit there is probable cause to believe that ERIC EUGENE
 18 LOBDELL has committed the violations described above. In particular, the investigation
 19 has uncovered substantial evidence that ERIC EUGENE LOBDELL possessed and
 20 distributed child pornography between January and June 2015.

21 II. P2P FILE-SHARING

22 6. P2P file-sharing is a means by which individuals can communicate and
 23 share digital files and/or folders with each other over the Internet. The Internet is a
 24 means and facility of interstate commerce. An individual obtains the P2P software,
 25 which can be downloaded from the Internet, often for free, and installs it on his computer.
 26 Generally speaking, P2P file-sharing works as follows: an individual user selects files
 27 from his computer he wishes to share with other individuals running the same P2P
 28 software on their computers. Once the software is installed and files are chosen for

sharing, the individual user opens the P2P software on his computer and connects with

1 others who are running the same P2P software on their computers. The individual user
2 then conducts searches over the P2P network for files that other P2P network users have
3 selected for sharing and downloads the shared files.

4 7. This particular investigation involved the Ares P2P file-sharing program.

5 **III. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

6 8. In January 2015, I was conducting an investigation into the sharing of child
7 pornography files on the Ares P2P file-sharing network. The Ares network, like other
8 P2P file sharing networks, uses file hashing to uniquely identify files on the network, and
9 users typically locate files with keyword searches.

10 9. In order to identify those who may be sharing child pornography over the
11 network, I performed several keyword searches for terms commonly used in filenames of
12 files containing child pornography. I also did hash value searches of known or suspected
13 images of child pornography. A hash value is an alphanumeric sequence that is unique to
14 a specific digital file. Any identical copy of the file will have exactly the same hash value
15 as the original but any alteration of the file, including even a change of one or two pixels,
16 results in a different hash value. The hash value is, in essence, a unique digital fingerprint
17 of that file, and when a match of the "fingerprint" occurs, the file also matches.

18 10. From these searches, I identified a computer with the IP address
19 24.56.218.43 as a possible source of at least one file of suspected child pornography. I
20 was able to determine the IP address because it was displayed by the Ares program.

21 11. On January 27th, 2015, between 10:26 p.m. and 11:46 p.m., I successfully
22 downloaded the following file from the computer with IP address 24.56.218.43: a four
23 minute and seven second video titled "webcam stickcam spycam - 11y - chatzppl -
24 vichatter mast on bed 2011.mpg."

25 12. I viewed this video and saw the following:

26 This video shows a prepubescent female sitting in a chair with the camera
27 focused on her genitals. She is wearing a gray shirt and underpants. The
28 girl is seen holding her underpants to the side and masturbating. Based on
the absence of pubic hair, breast development, and her stature, I estimate
she is between ten and twelve years old.

1 13. The following day between 7:20 a.m. and 8:53 a.m., I downloaded another
2 file from a computer with the same IP address as above: a six minute and ten second
3 video file titled "9yr jenny suck little dog cock.mpg."

4 14. I viewed this video and saw the following:

5 This video shows a naked, prepubescent female lying on a bed and on her
6 right side. The camera is mainly focused on the young girl's vaginal area.
7 The young girl then performs oral sex on an adult male's penis. At the end
8 of the video, the same girl is shown tied up with yellow rope and her legs
9 spread wide apart while an adult male rubs her vagina with his fingers.
Given her stature and the absence of breast development or pubic hair, I
estimate the girl is between eight and eleven years old.

10 15. With the assistance of other agents, I determined that IP address
11 24.56.218.43 is registered to Wave Broadband. In response to a DHS Summons, Wave
12 Broadband provided subscriber information associated with this IP address during the
13 two occasions in January when I downloaded the videos described above. That response
14 showed that this IP address was registered to LOBDELL and S.S. at a residential address
15 in Clinton, Washington. The billing information for that account shows that the sole
16 account holder is LOBDELL. On June 10, 2015, I obtained a warrant to search
17 LOBDELL's home in Clinton, Washington, from U.S. Magistrate Judge Dean Brett.

18 16. On June 16, 2015, I served this search warrant and seized several digital
19 devices, including LOBDELL's desktop computer, on which I have identified a large
20 collection of images and videos showing children engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

21 17. During the search, I conducted an interview of LOBDELL. I advised
22 LOBDELL of his constitutional rights, and he agreed to speak with me without an
23 attorney present. Among other things, LOBDELL stated that he had been looking at
24 "child pornography" his whole life and that he is aware of what it is. He acknowledged
25 having a "foot fetish" and told me that agents would find images of feet on his computer.
26 LOBDELL also remarked to his son, "I guess you know I'm in trouble for downloading
27 underage girls."
28

1 18. As noted above, among the digital devices seized was LOBDELL's desktop
2 computer—a Cybertron PC and the accompanying hard drive, a one TB Western Digital
3 Hard Disk Drive. A forensic review of this computer shows that LOBDELL possessed at
4 least 13,400 images and videos that appear to depict minors engaged in sexually explicit
5 conduct. These include the files described above that I downloaded in January using the
6 Ares P2P program and the two examples described below:

7 Filename: DSC06566.JPG

8 Description: This image is a prepubescent female lying on a white sheet or
9 blanket. Her legs are spread apart exposing her genitalia. There is lack of
10 pubic hair and breast development. There is writing on the inside of her
11 left leg that reads "I (heart symbol) Gavin"

12 Filename: pthc 2012 11y girl nude totaly show (expuntitos).flv

13 Description: The length of the movie is: 7 min 46 sec

14 The female in this video appears to be approximately 7-9 years old with
15 blond hair. She is wearing a black shirt with orange/red writing. There is
16 a white cartoon character on the shirt as well. The female positions
17 herself in front of the camera on a fashion that is videotaping her
18 genitalia showing the lack of pubic hair. She uses her fingers to penetrate
her vagina and her anus.

19 19. I know from my training and experience that Western Digital hard drives
20 are not manufactured in Washington State.

21 20. In addition to these images and videos of child pornography found on
22 LOBDELL's desktop computer, I also found numerous video and image files depicting
23 young girls that appeared to be homemade. These included photos of children at a
24 playground in which the camera was focused on the bottom of a young girl's skirt. I
25 estimate the subject of the photo was between seven and nine years old. I also found
26 dozens of photos of a girl I would estimate is between seven and nine years old wearing a
27 pink bathing suit. Many of these photos are focused on her chest or groin. It would
28 appear from the angle and distance that these photos were taken surreptitiously.

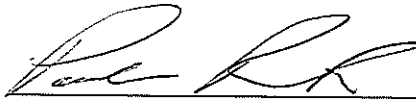
1 21. I also found eight photos of an individual identified as MV1. MV1 is a
2 friend of S.S.'s daughter who had previously stayed in the home LOBDELL and S.S.
3 shared in Clinton, Washington. At the time these photos were taken, MV1 was eleven
4 years old. In these photos, MV1 is shown sitting on the toilet using the bathroom, and
5 her genitals are clearly visible. S.S. confirmed the identity of MV1.

6 22. I also found several photos and videos of another individual, MV2. Several
7 of the videos show LOBDELL setting up the camera in a bedroom and then MV2's
8 entering the bedroom to dress. Others do not show the camera operator and just MV2 in
9 a state of undress. In all of these videos, MV2 does not appear to be aware that she is
10 being filmed. In addition to videos of MV2 dressing, I identified videos and photos that
11 appear to have been taken while MV2 was asleep. The person operating the camera can
12 be seen pulling MV2's sleeping shorts/underwear to the side and then filming MV2's
13 genitals.

14 23. On November 9, 2015, I interviewed MV2, who is now an adult. MV2
15 confirmed that LOBDELL lived with her family for approximately four or five years.
16 MV2 identified herself as the subject of the surreptitiously recorded videos and photos
17 and stated that she had no idea she was being filmed. MV2 believes that these photos and
18 videos would have been taken when she was between the ages of thirteen and fifteen.
19 Some of these videos are date stamped in December 2011. Others do not possess and
20 time and date stamp but have the same victim in the same setting as the ones mentioned
21 above. MV2 is currently twenty years old.

22 24. I also found approximately thirty images of naked girls that appeared to
23 have been taken surreptitiously in a bathroom. S.S. was able identify two of the girls,
24 MV3 and MV4, as friends of her daughter, MV5. According to S.S. she and LOBDELL
25 had taken all three girls to a hotel to celebrate MV5's birthday in June 2014, and the
26 photos were taken in the bathroom of that hotel room. Also according to S.S., she had
27 taken the girls swimming at the hotel pool while LOBDELL, who claimed to be ill,
28 stayed in the hotel room. Finally, S.S. stated that at the time of this trip, MV3 was nine
years old, MV4 was approximately ten years old, and MV5 was eleven years old.

1 25. Based on the above facts, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause
2 to believe that ERIC EUGENE LOBDELL did knowingly and intentionally distribute,
3 and possess child pornography, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections
4 2252(a)(2), and 2252(a)(4)(B).

5
6
7 

8 Pauline Renick, Complainant
9 Task Force Officer, Homeland Security Investigations

10 Based on the Complaint and Affidavit sworn to before me, and subscribed in my
11 presence, the Court hereby finds that there is probable cause to believe the Defendant
12 committed the offenses set forth in the Complaint.

13
14 Dated this 23rd day of November, 2015.

15
16
17 

18 The Honorable Dean Brett
19 United States Magistrate Judge
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28